

Amendments to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Canceled)

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently amended) An optical pickup device for writing data or reading data recorded on an optical disk, said optical pickup device comprising:

a laser light source for emitting a laser beam for writing data or reading data;

photodetectors having light-receiving portions for respectively receiving ~~the a~~ laser beam reflected by ~~the~~ recording surfaces of a plurality of layers of the optical disk; and

an optical system for guiding to the optical disk the laser beam emitted from the laser light source, and guiding to the photodetectors the laser beam reflected by the optical disk;

said optical system having:

a half mirror for reflecting or transmitting a laser beam emitted from the laser light source, and transmitting or reflecting the light reflected from the optical disk;

a collimator lens for converting the laser beam reflected or transmitted by the half mirror into parallel light;

an object lens for condensing the laser beam converted to parallel light by ~~this~~ the collimator lens onto the recording surfaces of the optical disk, having a curvature or refractive index that varies by steps in the radial direction, and comprising a multifocal lens for focusing on ~~a plurality of~~ recording surfaces of the optical disk~~[[,]]~~; and

a diffraction grating for diffracting a part of the laser beam ~~penetrated or reflected by~~ transmitted through the half mirror and guiding the laser beam to ~~any~~ at least one of the light-receiving portions; wherein

the object lens condenses the laser beam emitted from ~~one~~ the laser light source onto the recording surfaces ~~of the multiple layers~~ of the optical disk, and

the diffraction grating guides ~~reflected~~ light reflected by the recording surfaces ~~of the layers~~ to a plurality of light-receiving portions, so as to simultaneously read or write data to the recording surfaces ~~of the layers~~.

4. (Currently amended) An optical disk playback device comprising:

the optical pickup device according to ~~any of claims~~ claim 1 through 3;

playback means for simultaneously reading data recorded on ~~the~~ recording surfaces of a plurality of layers of an optical disk by means of the optical pickup device and playing back ~~the~~ data of one of the recording surfaces; and

storage means for saving ~~the~~ data of another of the ~~other~~ recording ~~surface~~ surfaces.

5. (New) The optical pickup device of claim 3, wherein the collimator lens is interposed between the half mirror and the optical disk and wherein the object lens is interposed between the collimator lens and the optical disk.